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## **Sen. Allen concerned about governor's MiPC program**

**LANSING** – Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City, has expressed concern about the governor's proposed MiPC program. The program seems to be nothing more than an endorsement deal for certain companies to encourage consumers to buy a name-brand PC with no actual pricing assurances.

"I'm not sure the state should step into telling consumers what products are the best for them to buy," Allen said. "I don't think it is the state's place to back a private company – especially companies based in Texas, Washington and China. Considering the current state of Michigan's economy, if we are going to endorse any company we should support Michigan companies."

According to the Granholm administration, the MiPC program is a "backed state government program, not a government funded program" – meaning no taxpayer dollars are used to fund the effort.

The Michigan Department of Information Technology and the Department of Management and Budget are currently reviewing bids from companies to provide packages through the MiPC program.

"I am unclear on how this isn't costing any taxpayer dollars when state employees, who are paid with tax dollars, are putting countless hours into working on this program," Allen said. "This simply doesn't add up to me."

The administration also claims the program will help drive down costs of computers and allow more residents to be able to buy computer packages.

"From what I have been able to learn, there is nothing in the program to help consumers to save money," Allen said. "So far, from what I've seen, it's a bunch of smoke and mirrors."

Chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor, Allen has convened a hearing on the MiPC program and plans to hold another hearing soon where he hopes to receive more specific answers to his concerns.

Allen also sent a letter to Teri Takai, director of the Michigan Department of Information Technology, asking for clarification on several key issues such as:

- Whether or not the MiPC program gives any preference to Michigan companies;
- If there are any requirements on whether or not vendors manufacture their product in the United States or Michigan; and
- If there are stipulations on technical support representatives being physically located in United States or Michigan.

“Committee members would like some more information from the administration on what this program actually does to help consumers,” Allen said. “So far the information provided by the governor has been long on promises and short on facts.”

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